



DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHP ENCOURAGES PARENTS TO TEACH KIDS ABOUT 9-1-1

KIDS WEEK EMPHASIZES DO'S AND DON'T'S

SACRAMENTO – Children must learn how to use 9-1-1, because youngsters can save a life or tie up emergency response, depending on how they use the emergency number system, said CHP Commissioner D. O. “Spike” Helmick.

“Parents should take the lead in teaching children about 9-1-1. It’s a matter of life or death,” said Helmick. The CHP answers all wireless 9-1-1 calls at 24 dispatch centers statewide.

May 16-24 has been declared 9-1-1 for Kids Week by the Legislature. The state and local agencies in 1994 pioneered an education program which produced materials to teach children to use 9-1-1 correctly.

Helmick cited the example of an 8-year-old boy who saved his uncle, floating unconscious in the water, after a boating accident. The youth called 9-1-1 on a cellular telephone and his uncle was saved.

“9-1-1 is easy for kids to remember. They need to know it’s free from any telephone, it’s important to speak slowly and clearly, and it’s for emergencies only,” Helmick said.

Tell children they should call 9-1-1 if they need a policeman, fire engine, ambulance or rescue squad, Helmick said.

Helmick cautioned parents to emphasize that dialing 9-1-1 as a joke could tie up the line for a real emergency.